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"Become a Patriot Join Citizen Corps"

Identity Theft

How can someone steal your identity? Identity theft occurs when someone uses your personal information such as your name, Social Security number, credit card number or other identifying information, without your permission to commit fraud or other crimes.

Identity theft is a serious crime. People whose identities have been stolen can spend months or years - and their hard-earned money - cleaning up the mess thieves have made of their good name and credit record. In the meantime, victims may lose job opportunities, be refused loans, education, housing or cars, or even get arrested for crimes they didn't commit.

If you think your identity has been stolen, here's what to do now:

Contact the fraud departments of any one of the three major credit bureaus to place a fraud alert on your credit file. The fraud alert requests creditors to contact you before opening any new accounts or making any changes to your existing accounts. As soon as the credit bureau confirms your fraud alert, the other two credit bureaus will be automatically notified to place fraud alerts, and all three-credit reports will be sent to you free of charge. Major Credit Card Bureaus:

<http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/9>

Close the accounts that you know or believe have been tampered with or opened fraudulently. Complete the ID Theft Affidavit form when disputing new unauthorized accounts. File a police report. Get a copy of the report to submit to your creditors and others that may require proof of the crime. To obtain the Theft Affidavit:

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/credit/affidavit.pdf>

File your complaint with the FTC. The FTC maintains a database of identity theft cases used by law enforcement agencies for investigations. Filing a complaint also helps us learn more about identity theft and the problems victims are having so that we can better assist you. To file a FTC Complaint: [https://rn.ftc.gov/pls/dod/widtpubl\\$.startup?Z_ORG_CODE=PU03](https://rn.ftc.gov/pls/dod/widtpubl$.startup?Z_ORG_CODE=PU03)

From the Program Coordinator's Desk by Gary Zulinski

I am very pleased and thankful to Governor Jennifer Granholm for mentioning us in her 2004 State of the State address. The Governor is very supportive of Michigan Citizen Corps and I am working closely with her Homeland Security Advisor Col. McDaniel and Capt. John Ort of Michigan State Police in making Michigan a model for Citizen Corps.

I recently attended the Homeland Security Expo in Sterling Heights where I was one of several guest speakers to discuss Homeland Security issues that Michigan communities now face. There were speakers from the FBI, Secret Service and the Michigan State Police. My thanks to Bob Johnson, Sterling Heights Emergency Manager and Sterling Heights Citizen Corps Council Chair, for inviting me and organizing the Expo.

I am in conversations with representatives from various state health organization to address Medical Reserve Corps and how Michigan Citizen Corps can help facilitate a state model for answering the call to major medical disasters in Michigan. I see Michigan Citizen Corps playing an important role in implementing the state plan.

I want to welcome three additional councils Wayne and Otsego Counties and Denton Twp in Roscommon County. This brings the total to 13 county councils and 10 local councils. Michigan Citizen Corps is growing! Spread the word!

I have been asked to be a guest speaker at the upcoming Michigan Chiefs of Police Mid-Winter conference to be held February 11-13 in Grand Rapids. I will be speaking about Michigan Citizen Corps and its four programs and how they can be of assistance to Michigan Police Chiefs and their communities. It is my hope that I can increase the number of registered Volunteers in Police Service programs, and convey that VIPS is important for police departments to deliver quality service in times when loss of revenues are causing cutbacks.

The grant proposals for CERT are due Thursday, February 12, 2004 by 5:00 p.m. I posted the 2004 Office of Domestic Preparedness funding January 30th. The intent to apply letter is due February 26th with the grant applications due Thursday March 25, 2004 by 5:00 p.m. President Bush's proposed 2005 budget asks for an increase in Homeland Security and it is a safe bet that Michigan Citizen Corps will also see an increase in funding to pass on to communities.

Guest Column

By: [Grace Ranger, Genesee County Emergency Management Director](#)

The Genesee County Citizens Corps was formed in January 2003, and accepted by the state as an official Corps in April 2003. We formed our group at the county level inviting people to join in the specific areas of law enforcement under our Sheriff, medical professionals under the Health Department and Emergency Management.

We keep 3 separate lists as well as a combined list with all disciplines. We cross-train everyone so they can be prepared to help out in any area if needed, but are assigned to their area of expertise.

Since that relatively short time we have come a long way. We have 130 county certified volunteers in our Corps, who have gone through orientation, traffic control, health issues, ICS, and Evidence Preservation Training Workshops. We have monthly training workshops on different topics, and all of our members will be asked to participate in the annual full-scale disaster exercise in May.

We also have developed a CERT program and have sent 13 of our members to train-the-trainer classes. We have held one CERT training locally by our newly trained trainers for 27 of our Corps members, and have a session scheduled for January and February.

Recently, we were awarded a \$40,000 Grant from the Michigan Citizen Corps Council. We intend to purchase training materials and supplies as well as backpacks. We are also developing a training video in cooperation with one of our local television stations. Our goal is to educate all of our 436,000 residents through our Community Education Program.

AmeriCorps to Receive Historic Funding Increase in 2004

Washington D.C. — The 2004 Omnibus Appropriations Bill passed by the Senate contains an historic funding increase for AmeriCorps that will support a record 75,000 AmeriCorps members to meet needs in local communities across the nation.

The bill, which the President is expected to sign soon, provides an increase of \$167 million for AmeriCorps over the 2003 enacted level. The funding package, agreed to during the House-Senate conference in November, reflects President Bush's budget request and the growing bipartisan Congressional support for national and community service.

In addition to AmeriCorps, the bill provides funds to the two other key programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service - Senior Corps and

Learn and Serve America. All told, the Corporation's 2004 appropriation amounts to \$935 million - an increase of nearly 20 percent over the agency's fiscal year 2003 appropriation of \$786 million.

"This is an enormous step forward for AmeriCorps, our grantees, and the communities we serve, and we are extremely grateful to the President and Congress for their support," said David Eisner, Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation. "After a tough year, AmeriCorps is now positioned to come back stronger than ever. With this budget, we will be able to support 75,000 dedicated and committed Americans, who will be on the front lines tackling our nation's most pressing needs. The year 2004 will be an historic one for national and community service."

AmeriCorps members help nonprofit organizations carry out their missions in the areas of education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other needs. Members tutor children, build homes, respond to disasters, and provide a range of other services. In return for a year of full-time service, most AmeriCorps members receive an education award of \$4,725 that can be used to pay for college or graduate school or to pay off student loans.

The bill's combined appropriation of \$441 million for the AmeriCorps*State and National program includes \$312 million for grants to local and national groups, and \$129 million for the National Service Trust, which pays the education award. In addition, the bill provides \$24.9 million for AmeriCorps*NCCC, a residential, team-based service program for individuals 18 to 24 years old, and \$93.7 million for AmeriCorps*VISTA, which provides full-time volunteers to faith-based and community organizations that are working to increase self-sufficiency among the nation's poor.

"This bill demonstrates the President's commitment to expanding and improving the programs of the Corporation as a part of the overall effort to foster a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility in America," said Ron Christie, Acting Director of USA Freedom Corps, the White House initiative to promote and coordinate volunteer-related activities that includes the Corporation and its programs. "The President set an ambitious goal and worked hard to achieve it. We are pleased and grateful that Congress has also demonstrated strong support for service by funding AmeriCorps and the other

programs of the Corporation at the historic levels recommended by the President."

Senior Corps, through which more than 500,000 older volunteers use their experience and skills to help local organizations provide a wide range of community services, will receive a total appropriation of \$214 million, approximately the same funding level as last year. Senior Corps comprises RSVP (the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program), which will receive \$58.2 million; the Senior Companion Program, which will receive \$46 million; and the Foster Grandparent Program, which was appropriated \$110.1 million.

More than one million students engage in service projects sponsored by Learn and Serve America, which provides grants to state education agencies, schools, colleges, and nonprofit organizations to develop programs and curricula that link education with community service. The bill set the 2004 funding level for the program at \$42.7 million, approximately the same as in 2003.

Both the VA-HUD-Independent Agencies and Labor-HHS portions of the bill fund corporation programs. The 2004 appropriation for the Corporation, which covers the period from October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2004, closely parallels President Bush's initial budget request. The House had already passed the Omnibus bill on December 8.

"We deeply appreciate this vote of confidence in national and community service," said Stephen Goldsmith, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Corporation. "Congress has indicated that it wants the Corporation to be more effective and accountable, and to work with the field to achieve reforms. With a new leadership team and an aggressive management agenda, the Corporation is heeding Congress's call and is committed to ensuring that this historic investment is used wisely and well."

In addition to administering its own programs, the Corporation provides funds to the Points of Light Foundation and America's Promise, two nonprofit organizations whose missions focus on increasing volunteerism to provide needed social services. In fiscal 2004, the Points of Light Foundation will receive \$9.9 million, and America's Promise will

receive \$4.9 million - approximately the same amounts as last year.

The Corporation for National and Community Service provides opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to serve their communities and country through the Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs. Working with national and community nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies, the Corporation engages Americans in meeting critical needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other areas while fostering the habits of good citizenship. The Corporation and its programs are a key part of USA Freedom Corps, the White House initiative to help all Americans answer the President's Call to Service.

For more information, visit
www.nationalservice.org.

St. Clair River A Security Hazard Officials fear terror to take smuggling route

January 5, 2004

BY PEGGY WALSH-SARNECKI
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

The St. Clair River, just north of Detroit, is one of the worst areas along the Canadian border for smuggling drugs and illegal immigrants into the United States, local officials say -- raising concerns that terrorists could use that route to easily slip into the country.

"Drug production in western Ontario is running rampant, and a lot of the product is coming through there, along with illegal aliens and who knows what else," said Jeffrey Friedland, St. Clair County director of emergency management.

"This is not a fly-by-night smuggling operation," he said. "If you can smuggle people and drugs, you can smuggle weapons and anything else you want to put through there."

County officials hope to convince Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge that the area needs more federal help when Ridge visits Port Huron on Friday to discuss security concerns in the area.

"We definitely need more homeland security in our area," said Mike Pellerito, Clay Township clerk. "We've received some federal funding in the Port Huron area, but the entire Marine City, Algonac, Clay Township coastline is all Canadian border. Under the cover of darkness, it's very easy to smuggle."

Most notorious is the waterfront along Algonac and neighboring Clay Township between Algonac State Park and Harsens Island. Friedland and Pellerito say law enforcement officials spot illegal border crossings there on a weekly basis.

"And there's a lot that's undetected," Friedland said. What makes the river in front of the quiet town of Algonac such a smuggling hotbed is that members of the First Nation, an Indian group on Canada's Walpole Island across the river from Algonac, can legally use their boats at night -- without running lights.

That allows the American Indians to fish in their traditional manner. But it also makes it easy for smugglers to turn off their lights. It doesn't take more than a 16-foot aluminum boat to make the short run across the river.

"At 3 o'clock in the morning you can hear a boat coming across the river," said Algonac Police Sgt. Ed Silver. "You can hear it, but you can't see it."

"It's definitely a concern, even without the terror alert elevated."

Not only is it close to Walpole, the area is also riddled with canals, giving the communities their waterfront ambiance. But having so many places to land boats makes it even more difficult to control smuggling.

Compounding the problem, officials say, is a lack of funding for increased security. Money is so scarce that Algonac's eight-person Police Department is finally about to receive its first pair of night vision goggles.

The \$10 million to \$12 million needed for an updated communications system will be high on Friedland's wish list when he meets with Ridge. The county's current system is so outdated that police, fire and emergency medical personnel can't always talk to each other on the radio. There are several areas in the county Friedland calls "black holes," where their radios don't even work.

Wayne, Macomb and Monroe counties received additional federal money to patrol the Canadian border after 9/11.

But the federal money was earmarked for urban areas. St. Clair County, one county removed from the metro area, didn't qualify, Friedland said.

The St. Clair River in general is a problematic border, with multiple access points to Canada. There are the two spans of the Blue Water Bridge over the river and a train tunnel under the river, into Port Huron.

Plus, there are two ferries that cross the river from Canada, at Marine City and at Algonac. As small ports, the ferries don't merit the same level of security as do the larger crossings in Port Huron and Detroit.

Unlike the Ambassador Bridge and Windsor Tunnel, hazardous materials are permitted to cross the St. Clair River, including aboard the ferries.

The area has other possible terrorist targets, including four power plants and eight water plants. The ground is riddled with natural gas storage caverns, and there are more than 30 energy pipelines transporting oil and gas between the United States and Canada, Friedland said.

The U.S. Border Patrol increased its surveillance of the area last year, Friedland said. Other agencies, including the St. Clair County sheriff's marine division, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Customs and some joint U.S.-Canadian patrols try to help. But it's still a slippery net.

"The local communities do what they can," Friedland said. "The problem is still there, and it's a big-time problem."

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FBI, DHS WARN OF POSSIBLE SUBWAY, RAIL ATTACKS

There is a continuing terrorist threat against U.S. subways and railways, the FBI and Department of Homeland Security said in a bulletin sent to law enforcement agencies.

"Recent intelligence indicates a continued terrorist interest in conducting attacks on U.S. subways and railways," the bulletin said. "Although the FBI possesses no information indicating a specific threat to subways and rail systems in the United States, the potential for an attack cannot be ruled out."

The FBI and DHS mention in the bulletin that Osama bin Laden's **Al Qaeda** terror network has had a long-standing fascination with the 1995 sarin gas attacks on the Tokyo subway system.

"An attack on a subway or rail system could cause substantial loss of life, and would have an adverse impact on public confidence, resulting in massive economic loss," the bulletin said.

Sarin is most known for the March 1995 terrorist attack by the **Aum Shinrikyo** religious cult, when members released the gas at several points in the Tokyo subway system, killing 11 and injuring more than 5,500. The perpetrators left punctured packages of liquid sarin in subway cars and stations, which gave officials time to seal off the affected areas.

The bulletin describes possible attack scenarios, such as train derailment, trackside bombs and chemical or biological attacks.

"Public rail transportation is highly accessible, making critical assets such as signal boxes and communication lines vulnerable and difficult to protect against attack," according to the bulletin. "Passenger railcars, subways and underground transfer stations with large numbers of people in confined spaces represent potentially attractive targets for terrorists."

The FBI and DHS said that timetable and operating schedules are publicly available and therefore accessible by terrorists.

"Internet sites provide information regarding the location of critical rail assets for train command and control," the agencies said.

"U.S. rail and subway systems play a vital role in urban public transportation and freight movement, carrying considerable economic resources. Attacks

on rail systems require less planning, training and materials than attacks against large passenger aircraft or cruise ships, potentially increasing their attractiveness to a diminished Al Qaeda."

The FBI warned law enforcement and security personnel to remain vigilant to potential pre-operational planning and for any attempts by individuals to bring explosives or chemical devices on a rail or subway system.

Fox News' Anna Stolley contributed to this report.

DHS UNVEILS NATIONAL CYBER ALERT SYSTEM

The National Cyber Security Division (NCSD) of DHS has unveiled the National Cyber Alert System. This system is designed for both home computer users and security professionals, arming users to take a proactive role in securing cyberspace.

As part of this program, Homeland Security is making available a series of information products targeted for home users and technical experts in businesses and government agencies. These e-mail products provide timely information on computer security vulnerabilities, potential impact, and action required to mitigate threats, as well as PC security "best practices" and "how to" guidance.

Access the program website: <http://www.us-cert.gov/>

New Medical Reserve Corps Program Director

The Office of the Surgeon General is proud to announce that Commander Robert J. Tosatto has joined its staff as Director of the Medical Reserve Corps Program.

CDR Tosatto comes to this position from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of Global Health Affairs (OGHA), where he most recently served as Director of the Office for Eurasia , and prior to that as a Senior International Health Officer. His primary role for the past four years has been managing the HHS Biotechnology Engagement Program and coordinating HHS

activities with Russia and other former Soviet countries.

Prior to the OGHA assignment, CDR Tosatto was detailed from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to the D.C. Commission on Mental Health Services, where he served as Director of the Medical Staff Office. He has also completed several tours of duty with the Indian Health Service, including assignments on the Navajo, Fort Hall, and Pine Ridge Indian Reservations.

CDR Tosatto was deployed on five anthrax response missions with the Commissioned Corps Readiness Force (CCRF) following September 11, 2001 . Prior to that, in 1999, he was deployed by CCRF to the Kosovar refugee health clinic in Fort Dix during the early period of "Operation Provide Refuge." That year he also completed a technical assessment of the pharmaceutical and medical supply situation in the Republic of Montenegro after the NATO bombing campaign in Serbia .

CDR Tosatto has been a Public Health Service Commissioned Corps officer since 1988. He holds a bachelor's degree in pharmacy as well as master's degrees in public health and business administration. He brings to the Office of the Surgeon General a unique mix of clinical and administrative skills, knowledge of national security issues, and emergency response experience, as well as service in a variety of geographic and cultural settings.

For more information about Michigan Citizen Corps, contact the Program Coordinator, Gary Zulinski at (517) 241-3867 or zulinskig@michigan.gov.